



March 21, 2014

This week's edition includes important information I want to share with you:

- **FY 2014-2015 Budget Hearing – Senate Health and Welfare Committee:** On Wednesday, I had the opportunity to present Governor Haslam's recommended budget for DIDD for FY 2014-15 to members of the Senate's Health and Welfare Committee, chaired by Senator Rusty Crowe. A link to the hearing video is [here](#). The DIDD budget hearing begins 3 hours and 18 minutes into the video.

I was pleased to hear questions from Senators on the committee as well as their supportive comments concerning important services that are funded by the budget administered by DIDD. The Health and Welfare Committee passed the DIDD budget to the Senate Finance, Ways and Means Committee by voice vote without any dissent. This hearing was the second of three public presentations that my team and I will make to legislative committees on our budget proposal for next fiscal year. Our final budget hearing is scheduled on the afternoon of March 24 with the House Finance, Ways and Means Committee. My team and I are committed to working closely with legislators and affected stakeholders as we support this budget through the legislative process.

- **Referral Process:** The department has revised its referral process for Intensive Behavior Residential Services (IBRS) and the Harold Jordan Center Day One program. These programs are similar in that they will both serve persons with severe and persistent behavioral health problems, but they will differ in their ability to deal with certain risk factors. For instance, persons with significant risk because of elopement might be more suited for Day One initially.

On the other hand, IBRS is a community program, so we want to ensure it is used whenever possible. People with persistent aggression, self-injury, property destruction or sexually inappropriate behavior at a moderate intensity may be more appropriate for IBRS. Both programs are open for referrals. Day One is currently operational and it is anticipated that RHD will open its IBRS program on May 1. ISCs for persons in need of either of these services should complete the attached referral form and send it to Dr. Bruce Davis (Bruce.Davis@tn.gov). Please contact Dr. Davis if you have any questions at 615-852-1194.

- **Supporting Families:** The department is thrilled for the opportunity to be involved with the Supporting Families Community of Practice (CoP) in partnership with the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities. Being a part of a learning community with five other states to learn about best practices that support families of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities is of critical importance at this time to the department's future. We are working on vital future planning for our service delivery system and wish to include things that people and their families need to obtain and maintain optimal quality of lives within the system.

This CoP will help guide DIDD and the Council through the next four years in strengthening Tennessee's interagency collaboration for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities as well as provide a platform for learning from five other states experiences. I am looking forward to the fruits of this endeavor as it shapes the future of services and supports for Tennesseans with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families. DIDD and the Council on Developmental Disabilities are pleased to present the [Supporting Families](#) newsletter as a tool we will use to share learning with our stakeholders. If wishing to subscribe, please contact Emma.Shouse@tn.gov.

- **Licensure Update:** I am pleased to announce Elaine Matthews has been promoted into a Lead Licensure Coordinator position. Elaine will retain her current East Region responsibilities, but now has oversight of Middle and West from a licensure perspective. One of Elaine's first priorities will be to finalize the DIDD rules for submission to the Secretary of State. As noted in an earlier edition, the department has been engaged in updating licensure rules currently shared with the Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services; most of these were last revised in the late 1990s and early 2000. Recommendations from our provider community on how to improve the rules so they reflect current best practices were solicited in August 2013 and are still welcome. Current rules are available [here](#).

Comments and feedback can be submitted directly to Elaine Matthews, Lead Licensure Coordinator at Elaine.C.Matthews@tn.gov or Lee Vestal, Director of Risk Management and Licensure at Lee.Vestal@tn.gov.

- **Reportable Incident Forms:** The Office of Incident Management has noticed a trend in the reduction of Reportable Incident Forms (RIFs) submitted after calls are made to the Investigations Hotline. Failure to submit a RIF causes delays in review and processing. Furthermore, these delays require a follow-up call from DIDD to get the provider to provide this required information. Incident Management would like to remind all providers, agencies and reporting persons that incidents reported to the DIDD Investigations Hotline must also be reported with a RIF to the Incident Management Unit. The RIF can be accessed [here](#) under "Forms and Tools." If you have questions, please contact Kenneth Binion, Director of Incident Management, at Kenneth.Binion@tn.gov or 615-253-2896.
- **Informational Sessions:** There are new requirements for Environmental Accessibility Modification (EAM) providers as indicated in the new DIDD Provider Manual. EAM services are covered in Chapter 13, section 13.17. Within this chapter, is a link to forms that are now required. To view the forms, click [here](#).

Two information sessions will be offered via phone conference for all EAM providers to review these requirements and ask questions; providers only need to call into one session at 615-532-5082 or 866-947-6428 (toll-free). Dates and times are listed below. Please contact Karen Wills, DIDD State Director of Therapeutic Services, at Karen.Wills@tn.gov if you have any questions.

Session 1: March 26, 2014 (11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. CST)

Session 2: April 1, 2014 (3:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. CST)

- **Person Centered Practices in Action:** Breanna, 18 years old, is currently supported by Compassionate Care and came to the Person Centered Practices Unit (PCPU) via referral in September 2013. Prior to her referral, Breanna had been through some tough situations and was unhappy. She had a difficult time communicating what she wanted to those around her.

From the beginning, it became really important that Breanna's meetings be about her and what she wanted, rather than what everyone else preferred. Her Circle of Support (CoS) discussed creative ways that Breanna could learn what she needed to, so she could live with more control over her own life. During this process, Breanna learned to tell those around her what frustrated her and more importantly, those around her learned to listen. It became a mutual partnership where Breanna was able to tell staff what she needed and her agency was able to make changes for her benefit. As a result of these changes, Breanna says that she has learned to not take her frustration out on others. She is able to share what she learns and how this will help her when or if she becomes upset.

In February, Breanna was invited to speak at the Middle Tennessee Regional Office Provider Meeting about her experiences with person centered practices. She accepted the invitation and worked on her speech for about a month. She wanted to make sure she got it right. Standing in front of approximately 120 people, Breanna talked about what had worked for her and some things that did not work for her. Breanna gave a very moving speech and garnered a standing ovation from the crowd. She acknowledged how difficult the beginning was, but also discussed how much easier it was to work through some of her issues. She explained her staff listened and kept their promises along the way, which is important to Breanna. Her CoS supported her by standing alongside her and discussed how this process has helped Breanna.

Breanna's CoS has also helped her celebrate many milestones along the way, including moving to a new home. This was another item on her list of things 'not working' and it was accomplished. We celebrate Breanna and hope she continues on her path of success! For more information about Person Centered Practices, please contact Kelly Hyde, Middle Coordinator at Kelly.Hyde@tn.gov or 615-884-4315.

- **Training Data Reminder:** The DIDD Staff Development office would like to remind all agency trainers and managers at the end of this fiscal year, they will no longer be able to research and load historical College of Direct Support (CDS) training data not already visible in the Relias web-based training platform. However, Quality Assurance (QA) continues to accept paper PDF transcripts as well as electronic Relias or CDS training records.

Each agency is strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the new SHARE functionality created by the Relias Learning Management System. The great advantage of this new feature is the learner's capability to share their training records with multiple agencies they might work for over the course of their career. This will decrease time in repeating completed courses and allow them to add new required classes to their training transcripts, resulting in the learner and agency being able to track all of the employee's training. This SHARE functionality will eliminate the need for agencies to move learners' information. Instructions for sharing records and linking all relevant employing provider agencies are on the DIDD website [here](#) and available from the Relias helpdesk at DIDD.ISQA@tn.gov.

In addition, the training tab on our website has been updated with a Relias Administrator's Packet, the latest revision of the Staff Development Plan/Resource Guide referenced in the new Provider Manual (Chapter 6-Training) and an user friendly table of "Training Requirements by Provider Staff Category." Webinars, Q&A, Relias course crosswalks, forms and templates are also available on the site.

- **Supporting Innovation:** The Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities recently launched a new [Community Development Grant](#). This fund is available to Tennesseans with disabilities and their family members and provides assistance to visit and research innovative

disability-related programs in other states. Upon their return, the grant provides recipients with a small stipend to implement their Plan of Action toward replicating and sustaining a similar program in their communities here in Tennessee.

If you know of eligible individuals (person with a disability or a family member) who are interested in this opportunity, please pass this information along. Visit www.tn.gov/cdd to find out more and download an application. If you have any questions, contact Alicia Cone at Alicia.Cone@tn.gov or 615-253-1105.

- **Survey of Tennessee Parents:** TennesseeWorks requests your completion of an important new survey focused on the expectations and resource needs of Tennessee families impacted by disabilities. Parents who have sons or daughters with intellectual disabilities, autism or other developmental disabilities of any age can participate. Through this project, the needs and aspirations of families will be shared with the Governor, state legislators and leadership from state agencies and disability organizations across Tennessee.

A link to the online survey can be found [here](#) along with a description. Fifty parents will be randomly selected to receive a \$25 gift card for completing the survey. You can also request a print copy by contacting tennesseeworks@vanderbilt.edu or 615-343-2375.

The goal of TennesseeWorks is to hear from parents in **every** county and community across the state! Your participation matters and strong involvement is needed from all regions to ensure findings represent all Tennessee families. We hope you will participate and forward this to families in your area. If you have any questions, please contact Carly.L.Blustein@vanderbilt.edu.

- **CREATION Health:** Two hospitals in Greeneville are sponsoring a community-wide program through CREATION Health to improve the health of persons living in Greene County. CREATION is an acronym for choice, rest, environment, activity, trust in a divine power, interpersonal relationships, outlook and nutrition. Since the wellness group in the DIDD East Region was one of the first community organizations to sign up, they were able to organize a free educational opportunity for people living at GVDC and employees in the East Region. Erin Franklin, CREATION Health Coordinator, presented two (2) seminars on February 20 and March 4. Topics covered in the first two seminars were choice and rest, and all were enlightened on some interesting facts and research to improve the quality of one's life. Participants watched a video that defined the CREATION Health lifestyle. In addition, each participant was given a personal study guide, with a few minutes spent on the self-assessment tool to determine focus areas. The group is excited about upcoming topics in Ms. Franklin's 8-week seminar!



- **Employment First Community of Practice Webinars:** On April 21 and May 12, presenters Thomas Macy and Nancy Gurney will begin a two-part series on organizational assessment, diversifying funding streams and collecting data to measure progress. Registration is limited to 25 participants and is on a first-come, first-serve basis. To RSVP for April 21, please contact Betty Chester at Betty.Chester@tn.gov by April 11 at 4:00 p.m. CST. To RSVP for May 12, please contact Betty by May 5 at 4:00 p.m. CST.

- **Employment Network:** A few seats remain for a capacity building session regarding Employment Network and Ticket to Work on April 2 from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m at Goodwill Industries of Middle Tennessee at 937 Herman Street in Nashville (Room 121). The session will provide an overview of the Disability Employment Initiative grant, Ticket to Work and how agencies can work on implementing diversification of revenues and partnering with a workforce that has already become an Employment Network. If your agency is interested in learning more about becoming an Employment Network and Ticket to Work, please RSVP to Amy Gonzalez at Amy.Gonzalez@tn.gov by March 28.
- **Customized Employment and Discovery Seminar:** The Workforce Investment Network (WIN) Disability Employment Initiative will conduct a one-day seminar on *Customized Employment & Discovery* on April 23 at the University of Memphis Holiday Inn from 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Facilitated by industry expert Patty Cassidy, the seminar will introduce participants to Customized Employment (CE), a set of tools and practices that assist people with significant disabilities and/or complex barriers to obtain community employment. Case studies of people in CE will showcase a variety of successful negotiated outcomes and possibilities. The registration deadline is April 7; please click [here](#) if interested. If you have any questions, please contact Phyllis Brunson at 901-636-7940 or phyllis.brunson@workforceinvestmentnetwork.com.

Be safe and have a great weekend!

~Debbie